

Remarks

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the present application in view of the following remarks.

Cited Art

The action cites Blaho, U.S. Patent No. 2,255,964 (Blaho); Viola *et al.*, U.S. Patent No. 3,873,168 (Viola); and Satoh *et al.*, U.S. Patent No. 5,499,440 (Satoh).

Interview Summary

The undersigned attorney conducted a telephone interview with Examiners Salone and Cozart on August 24, 2009. In the interview, it was agreed that the claims are patentable over Blaho and Viola. The substance of the interview is further discussed below.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

The action rejects claims 1-7, 10-12, 13-18, and 20 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Blaho in view of Viola. The action also rejects claims 8, 9, and 19 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Blaho in view of Viola, in further view of Satoh.

Independent Claim 1

Independent claim 1 is directed to a method of manufacturing a bush from a blank comprising:

- providing a blank having a surface to be lined and at least one spigot upstanding from the surface;
- providing a liner having an aperture;
- locating the aperture in the liner around the spigot such that the liner lies on the surface; and
- stamping out the blank around the spigot to provide a lined and flanged bush.

As discussed in the telephone interview, Blaho discloses stamping a blank to form a bushing having a flange 3 and a spigot 2. In contrast to claim 1, Blaho does not teach or suggest “providing a blank having a surface to be lined and at least one spigot upstanding from the surface” and subsequently “stamping out the blank around the spigot to provide a lined and flanged bush,” as recited in claim 1.

Viola does not make up for the deficiencies of Blaho. The bushing shown in FIG. 2 of Viola is formed by first cutting a stack of graphite layers to the desired overall size and then molding the structure in a heated die to form the non-planar configuration shown in FIG. 2. (See Viola, col. 3, lines 19-36.) Thus, Viola also does not teach or suggest “providing a blank having a surface to be lined and at least one spigot upstanding from the surface” and subsequently “stamping out the blank around the spigot to provide a lined and flanged bush,” as recited in claim 1.

Accordingly, for at least the foregoing reasons, claim 1 is patentable over Blaho and Viola and therefore the rejection of claim 1 should be withdrawn.

Independent Claim 13

Independent claim 13 is directed to a flanged bush comprising:

- a spigot having a flange which provides a flange surface surrounding the spigot; and
- a liner having an aperture through which the spigot is located, wherein there is an adhesive bond between the flange surface and the liner and a mechanical bond between an outer edge of the liner and an edge of the flange.

In the rejection of claim 13, the action concedes that Blaho does not disclose a liner as recited in claim 13, but contends that it would have been obvious to add a graphite liner, as taught by Viola, to the bushing of Blaho “for the benefit of keeping the graphite fibers of an anti-friction lubricant in place to minimize friction after any wear occurs.” Applicants disagree that it would have been obvious to add a liner to the bushing of Blaho in order to minimize friction.

Blaho discloses a bushing 1 (having split flange portions 3a, 3b) that is inserted into an aperture 7 in a metal wall 8 of a container. After the bushing is inserted into the aperture, the flange portion 3a is bent back to its original position (as shown in FIG. 9), thereby clamping the bushing to the metal wall. The flange 3 is split in such a way so as to provide “ribs” 10, which are forced into the metal wall, thereby providing an interlock between the flange and the wall “to prevent turning” of the bushing relative to the wall. (See Blaho, col. 3, lines 44-49 and col. 4, lines 10-13.) Thus, adding a liner to the bushing of Blaho to minimize friction (as proposed by the action) would prevent or reduce the positive interlock that is required between the bushing and the container.

MPEP § 2143.01(V) states: “If proposed modification would render the prior art invention being modified unsatisfactory for its intended purpose, then there is no suggestion or motivation to make the proposed modification.” As explained above, modifying the bushing of Blaho to include the liner of Viola would render the bushing unsatisfactory for its intended purpose. Accordingly, there necessarily is no teaching or suggestion to combine Blaho and Viola in the manner proposed by the action.

Further, the action concedes that Blaho does not teach stamping a flange to form a mechanical bond, but contends that “it would have been obvious . . . that the mechanical bond between the liner and the edge of the flange could be formed during the act of stamping the blank.” As discussed in the telephone interview, Blaho does not teach or suggest stamping out a blank around a spigot to provide a lined and flanged bush. Thus, it would not have been obvious that the act of stamping in Blaho would result in the formation of a mechanical bond between an outer edge of a liner and an edge of a flange.

Accordingly, for at least the foregoing reasons, claim 13 is patentable over Blaho and Viola and therefore the rejection of claim 13 should be withdrawn.

Independent Claim 20

Independent claim 20 is directed to a flanged bush being formed by a method comprising:

- providing a blank having a surface to be lined and at least one spigot upstanding from the surface;
- providing a liner having an aperture;
- locating the aperture in the liner around the spigot such that the liner lies on the surface;
- adhesively bonding the liner to the surface; and
- stamping out the blank around the spigot to provide a lined bush having a flange with a mechanical bond formed between an outer edge of the liner and an edge of the flange.

In the rejection of claim 20, the action contends that it would have been obvious to combine Blaho and Viola to arrive at the bush recited in claim 20. Applicants disagree.

First, it would not have been obvious to combine the low friction liner of Viola with the bushing of Blaho because the liner would prevent, or at least inhibit, the bushing from forming a positive interlock with the surrounding wall of the container, as is required in Blaho. Second, as discussed in the telephone interview, Blaho does not teach stamping out a blank around a spigot.

Thus, it would not have been obvious that the act of stamping in Blaho would result in the formation of a mechanical bond between an outer edge of a liner and an edge of a flange.

Accordingly, for at least the foregoing reasons, claim 20 is patentable over Blaho and Viola and therefore the rejection of claim 20 should be withdrawn.

Dependent claims 2-12 and 14-19 are patentable for the reasons given above in support of their respective base claims and because each dependent claim recites an independently patentable combination of features.

Conclusion

The claims in their present form should be allowable. Such action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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